



# Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot

## *Miami, FL*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA Region 4 selected the City of Miami for a Regional Brownfields Pilot. Miami has identified a number of potential brownfields in the economically distressed Wynwood neighborhood (population 15,500), where business is over 40 percent light industry, warehousing, and commercial. Available information indicates that soil contamination in Wynwood is primarily from underground storage tanks, sewer pipes, and industrial chemicals. Wynwood includes a State Enterprise Zone (EZ) and the Miami-Metro Dade Federal Enterprise Community. Wynwood's poverty rate is 51 percent, exceeding the rest of Miami by about 20 percent. Wynwood residents are 62 percent Hispanic and 32 percent non-Hispanic black. Of eight known contaminated private sector sites, a five to six acre site will be selected for the Brownfields Pilot.

### OBJECTIVES

Miami's focus is to redevelop brownfields in Wynwood. The City will begin by assessing potential brownfields, and this will be followed by empowering residents to fully participate in decision making and planning for redevelopment of any selected site through town hall meetings and City service centers. The empowerment is supported by the new Department of Community Planning and Revitalization.

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Miami, Florida*

**Date of Award:**  
September 1996

**Amount:** \$100,000

**Site Profile:** The Pilot targets one of eight known contaminated private sector sites in the Wynwood area of the City. The targeted site will be five to six acres.

### Contacts:

Bob Schwarzreich  
City of Miami  
Community Planning and  
Revitalization  
(305) 416-1418

Barbara Dick  
U.S. EPA - Region 4  
(404) 562-8923  
dick.barbara@  
epamail.epa.gov

Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

The newly restructured City government will place greater emphasis on the role of the City's Neighborhood Enhancement Teams, which include planners and other City staff familiar with the dynamics of the neighborhoods they serve. To reach its objectives, the Pilot will conduct site assessments, community outreach, and facilitate redevelopment and cleanup.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

The Pilot has:

- Presented the proposed project to the Wynwood Community for their direct involvement. The City created the Wynwood Brownfields Workgroup to determine how brownfields redevelopment will proceed. The group is composed of a realtor, a banker, business owners, residents, community development corporations, and government staff;
- Selected a site for the first Brownfields Pilot environmental assessment. Completed the Phase 1 and 2 environmental site assessments at the Pilot site; and
- Formed the Pilot Advisory Committee to assist the City of Miami and other cities in the county with environmental issues regarding brownfields redevelopment efforts;

The Pilot is:

- Conducting a brownfields audit, including analysis of preliminary data, site visits, mapping of sites, testing for pollutants, and reviewing titles;
- Continuing community empowerment activities to encourage resident participation in redevelopment planning through town hall meetings, community decision-making charettes, and distribution of information on brownfields projects.

## **LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Experience with the Miami Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- The City Commissioners have assisted in facilitating the brownfields project efforts to redevelop a site. A City-held \$128,000 demolition lien was reduced by the City to 15% of its current value to make the property more attractive to prospective purchasers.
- Efforts of the Wynwood Brownfields Workgroup identified a prospective purchaser for a brownfields site in the neighborhood.
- Preparing brownfields conversion plans, including identification of strategies to overcome obstacles to redevelopment, presentation of incentives to encourage local investment, and preparation of environmental restoration plans.